

# The LAY-MONK.

*Discincta tunica fugiendum est, ac pede nudo.* Hor.

MONDAY, December 6. 1713.

THE Danger which our little *Lay-Monastery* so lately escap'd of being plunder'd, has been a frequent Subject of Discourse among us. Sir ARTHUR WIMBLETON now takes his Seat at Sir EUSTACE's Right Hand at the Table. We have all agreed to place him the next in Honour to our Founder; and in case of another Assault, he is already minuted in our Books as Governour of the *Lay-Convent*. We often commend his artful Way of applying to the Mob. Mr. JOHNSON says, He is an admirable Expofitor of Words; and NED FREEMAN the other Day ask'd him pleasantly, What those unlucky Stories were, that had like to have brought him into the *Inquisition in Italy*?

The Knight was rais'd to the Height of good Humour at our Praises, and at the Distinction we all pay him; and to shew at the same time that he was not unprovided of an Answer to NED FREEMAN, he related the following Story, which he assured us was well known in *Italy*, and which diverted us so much, that I was order'd to take it down in Writing, and publish it for the Paper of this Day.

FATHER *Nicolo* of *Narni* was a celebrated Preacher, and had generally a quick Eye in the Pulpit over the Female Part of his Audience. He was one Day preaching at *Catanea in Sicily*, when among the rest of his Auditory, he spy'd out a very agreeable young Woman, nam'd *Agatha*, Wife to one *Ruggieri* a Physician, and was immediately enamour'd with her Beauty. The Lady was so devoutly attentive to the Preacher, as to have her Eye constantly fix'd on him, and could not help perceiving that he was handsome, nor wishing secretly that her Husband were no less agreeable. After Sermon, she address'd her self to Father *Nicolo* for Confession, who was overjoy'd at this lucky Opportunity of discovering his Passion. *Agatha* had soon dispatch'd the Account of her own Sins; after which she very generously confess'd for her Husband too, and ask'd the holy Man, If he had no Cure for an old Man's Jealousy? The Father reply'd, That Jealousy was a Passion not to be avoided by the happy Person who possess'd so divine a Creature. *Agatha* smil'd, and thinking it time to

return to some Female Friends who were waiting for her, desir'd Absolution. The Confessor sigh'd, and leering on her with a languishing Look, My fair Daughter, says he, who can free another, that is bound himself? I am captivated and chain'd by the irresistible Power of your Beauty; and without your Assistance I can neither absolve my self nor you. *Agatha* was young and unexperienc'd, yet by the Help of a good natural Apprehension she was not at a Loss to unravel the Meaning of these Words: She had besides, to quicken her Wit, been strictly guarded and ill used by Doctor *Ruggieri*. She therefore soon let the Father see that she understood him, and that she was not displeas'd to find, notwithstanding the Sanctity of his Character, that he was Flesh and Blood like other Men. The Business of the Absolution was now forgot: Father *Nicolo* press'd his Passion; and at his earnest Request, the Lady undertook to find Means that he should make her a Visit. After a short Pause, she acquainted him, in order to this, that she was much troubled with Fits, and that all the Medicines her Husband cou'd give her, procur'd her no Ease; therefore, said she, the next time he is sent for into the Country, I'll feign my self seiz'd with my usual Distemper, and send to you to bring some Relick of St. *Griffon* for my Relief. You will, I suppose, comply with the Summons, and one of my faithful Maids shall be ready to conduct you to my Chamber. The Father applauded her Wit, pronounc'd a thousand Blessings on her for this happy Invention, embrac'd her in his Arms, and thus they parted.

Honest *Ruggieri*, who dreamt nothing of what had pass'd, went very opportunely out of Town the next Morning. The Lady was immediately seiz'd with a terrible Fit, and in the midst of her Attendants, who were officious in helping her, frequently call'd on the Name of St. *Griffon*, to afford her his Assistance. The crafty Confident that stood by, and was intrusted with the Secret, took the Hint, and press'd her to send for the Relicks of that Saint, which she said were famous for their miraculous Virtue and wonderful Cures. The Mistress, who seem'd scarce able to utter her Words, bid her do as she thought fit. Father *Nicolo* presently had Notice, and obey'd the Summons with the utmost Expedition. The

(Price Three Half-pence.)



The Father now arrived, and following his Female Guide, enter'd the Room where the afflicted Lady lay, and drew near her Bed-side with a becoming Gravity. The Lady receiv'd him with profound Reverence, and begg'd the Charity of his prevailing Prayers to Heav'n, and to glorious *St. Griffon*. He exhorted her to prepare her self, that she might be qualified to receive the Benefit of the Sacred Relicks he had brought; in order to which, says he, it is first necessary that with a contrite Heart you have Recourse to Confession, that so your Soul being heal'd, your Body may more easily be cured. The Lady reply'd, She desired nothing more. This was a Signal to the rest who were in the Room to depart, which they presently obey'd, and left the Two Lovers to their private Devotion.

The good Father had not long apply'd the Relicks of *St. Griffon* for the Recovery of the devout *Agatha*, when *Ruggieri* was discover'd at the Entrance of the Street, who return'd sooner than he was either desired or expected. The Lovers were immediately alarm'd, and the Fryar leap'd upon the Floor in such a Fright, that he forgot to take his Breeches, which upon that occasion he had thrown by, as an unnecessary Garment, at the Beds-head.

The Wench who was in the Secret, open'd the Door, and crying out that by the Favour of Heaven and of *St. Griffon*, her Lady was almost wholly recover'd, call'd in the rest of the Attendants. *Ruggieri* arriv'd at the same instant, but was not well pleas'd to observe, that a Fryar had found the Way to his House; nor was he less disturb'd at this new Illness of his Wife. *Agatha* perceiv'd his Disorder by the Change of his Countenance, and immediately told him, that she had been infinitely oblig'd to that Holy Father, by whose Prayers, together with the Application of the Relicks of *St. Griffon*, she had been snatch'd from the Grave. The good Man was overjoy'd to hear it was no worse, and correcting himself in his own Thoughts for his former Suspicions, very heartily thank'd the Fryar, who after some pious Discourse was glad to withdraw.

The Fryar was not gone far, before he recover'd out of his Fright, and the same Moment perceiv'd he had left his Breeches behind him. This put him into a new Concern; he durst not go back, but comforted himself as well as he cou'd in the Hope that *Agatha* or her Maid wou'd find them first, and take care to prevent further Mischief. Honest *Ruggieri* was now sitting on the Bed-side by his Wife, and saying a Thousand kind Things to her, when unluckily putting his Hand to adjust the Pillow under her Head, he laid hold on one of the Strings, and drew out the Breeches. This threw him into a worse Fit than any his Wife was accusom'd to fall into; he storm'd like a Mad-man, and ask'd how that Appurtenance of the Fryar came there? *Agatha*, who had all her Wits awaken'd by her new Amour, reply'd, without the least Hesitation, that it was what she had told him of. It is to this, says she, I owe my Cure. This is the miraculous Garment of *St. Griffon*, which the Holy

Father brought, and he has left it here for my greater Security and Devotion, till the Evening, at which Time he will send for it, or fetch it himself.

Poor *Ruggieri*, hearing so ready and unexpected an Answer, believ'd, or pretended to believe her, and retired. The trusty Wench was now dispatch'd on a new Errand, to desire the Father to send for his Relicks. She understood her Business, and acquainted Fryar *Nicolo* with all that had pass'd. The Fryar, press'd by the Necessity of the Affair, went to the Warden of the House, and confessing the whole Intrigue, begg'd that he wou'd help him out in this Extremity. The Warden sharply reprov'd him for his Negligence; but said there was no time to be lost, and something must be thought of to save the Reputation of the Order. He therefore caus'd the Chapter-Bell to be rung, and the Fryars being all assembled, he inform'd them, that Heav'n had that Day wrought a most remarkable Miracle, by Virtue of *St. Griffon's* Breeches, in the House of *Ruggieri*, the Physician. In short, he related to them the Particulars, and perswaded them to go and fetch back the Holy Garment, in a solemn Procession.

The Fryars were now drawn up in order, and with a Cross carry'd before them, and the Warden at their Head, holding the Tabernacle of the Altar in his Hand, march'd Two and Two in profound Silence to Dr. *Ruggieri's* House. *Ruggieri* met them at the Door, and demanded the Reason of this solemn Visit. The Warden told him, they were oblig'd by the Rules of their Order, to send their Relicks privately to such distress'd Persons as demanded the Use of them; that if thro' the Sins of such Persons, the Relicks had no Effect for their Relief, they were to fetch them as privately back; but when a manifest Miracle was wrought, they were to bring them home with decent Ceremony, to publish the Miracle, and finally to record it in Form in the Register of their Convent. *Ruggieri* now understood their Business, and was overjoy'd at the Honour which was done him. He told the Fathers they were all welcome, and desiring the Warden, and Father *Nicolo* to follow him, he led them to his Wife's Chamber. The good Lady who, it may be suppos'd, was not asleep in this Juncture, held the Breeches in her Hand, bound decently up in a perfum'd Napkin, which the Warden having open'd, kiss'd them with a profound Reverence; and having caus'd them to be kiss'd in like manner by all who were in the Room, he put them in the Tabernacle he had brought for that purpose, and gave the Signal to his Fraternity to return in the same Order.

The Fathers set forward in great Form, and singing an Anthem, march'd round the City, accompany'd with a numberless Croud, and then placing the Relick on the Altar of their Chappel, left it there, as an Object of Devotion. *Ruggieri* was zealous to promote the Veneration of the People to this pious Order, and with no little Pride acquainted all Persons, where-ever he came, of the astonishing Miracle wrought on his Wife, by Virtue of the Breeches of *St. Griffon*.

L O N D O N, Printed: And Sold by James Roberts in Warwick-Lane, where  
Advertisements are taken in.

